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Philosophy or Messianism?

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“Some even savour Heidegger’s special language; he ‘stalks’ language like a hunting dog ‘stalks’ (*stellt*) its prey. Rare are those who dare describe this language as the intense cultivation of a flowery rhetoric that produces only — *cauliflowers*.” Max Ernst, 1954¹

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Gregory Fried’s 2011 open letter to Emmanuel Faye showed an attitude of dialogical openness that deserves to be stressed. Such an attitude remains rare in the field of Heidegger studies, which is all too often characterized by the refusal of sober and reasoned debate, even going so far as refusing to read the analyses of commentators said to be radically critical of Heideggerian thought.² The violent tone that often characterizes the debate on Heidegger results from adhering to an authoritarian form of thought that, criminalizing reason, implicitly rejects argumentation and dialogue. Heidegger himself lays claim to “a philosophy that can never be *refuted*” (GA 94: 238). Such a way of thinking, both anti-rationalist and peremptory, has had a decisive impact on the apologetics of its reception among Heidegger’s defenders: denial, questioning the motivation of critics, and insults frequently take the place of measured and reasoned discussion. Fried’s initiative, which has made this volume possible, is therefore particularly welcome.

The present contribution examines a series of questions raised by four texts in this volume. It begins with a thesis about the central role of the codification of language in Heideggerian thought. It concerns a fundamental methodological point: *how* are we to read Heidegger today? Then it examines Heidegger’s alleged distancing from Nazism, focusing particularly on the nature of his anti-Semitism and his relation to technology and subjectivity. Finally, this essay concludes with some reflections on Heidegger’s legacy

I. How is Heidegger to be Read?

¹ Max Ernst, *Écritures* (Paris: Gallimard, 1970), 404. I take this opportunity warmly to thank Gregory Fried for his careful reading of my contribution and his many very helpful comments.

² Alain Badiou, “Lettre d’Alain Badiou à propos d’une recension autour de Faye/Heidegger sur Actua Philosophia,” *Strass de la philosophie* (blog), April 6, 2014, <http://strassdelaphilosophie.blogspot.de/2014/04/lettre-dalain-badiou-propos-dune.html>.

1. A Discriminatory Language

The *Black Notebooks* testify to their author's profession of faith in Nazism. While Heidegger's defenders have for decades treated this profession as an epiphenomenon, it now seems as though that faith was a constant foundation of his thought. The *Black Notebooks* certainly do not merely reveal — they *confirm* that Heidegger's political engagement was not just a momentary, personal weakness, one that should not bring his thought into question. They also enable us to clarify the connection between this engagement and his thought, including his best-known work, *Being and Time*.

The *Notebooks* bring to light a long ignored but central aspect of the peculiar mode of expression that Heidegger employed for his thought, a method only recently the subject of research: his recourse to a deliberately indirect language, even a politically coded language. The opacity of this language is not the unavoidable result of a particular philosophical profundity, just as it has little to do with a concern to “articulate the pure wonder that precedes any determinate, articulated philosophy.”³ It is rather a means of establishing, by way of exclusion, the philosophical and political power of a German spiritual elite. This strategic cryptography — which in the specific form he employed is unprecedented in the history of philosophy — has been the main source of the illusions about the philosophical depth of the Heideggerian oeuvre for almost half a century.

Heidegger's allusions to a need for a strategically indirect language constitute, by their sheer number, something of a leitmotif in the *Notebooks*. To take just one example, towards the end of 1940 Heidegger does not hesitate to declare that “*any* concession made to comprehensibility is already destruction” (GA 96: 222). This veiled language deliberately addresses a “small number” (GA 95: 76), the “essential men” (GA 95: 230), and keeps others at a distance. For Heidegger, “authentic saying” (GA 4: 37) must never be addressed to humanity (*Menschheit*) as a whole but only to certain kinds of human groups (*Menschentümer*; GA 96: 257). This is a distinction that Oswald Spengler, for example, also uses when he denies the universal equality of human beings.⁴ Dieter Thomä thus falls prey to a major misinterpretation when he supposes the existence of a Heideggerian concern for “the future of humanity.”⁵ This misinterpretation can also be found in Jean-Luc Nancy, who mistakenly translates Heidegger's *Menschentum* into French as “*humanité*,” humanity.⁶

This Heideggerian ‘saying’ is addressed only to a small number of initiates, who are understood as the “new lineage” (*Geschlecht*), those who are “to come” (GA 94: 115, 299) but who are also a “concealed lineage of those who are capable of questioning” (GA 94: 286). Heidegger specifies in the spring of 1938 that this indirect mode of speaking also applies to *Being and Time* (1927). He claims he did not “fully express” himself in that book, whose text is dressed in the “robes [*Gewand*] of ‘research’ and ‘demonstration’” (GA 94: 503). This is contrary to the erroneous assessment of Peter Trawny, the editor of the *Black Notebooks*, who, without further explanation, describes *Being and Time* as “a completely exoteric text.”⁷ Hence it is not correct to think, like Fried does, that “the text speaks for itself” (241 in original essay; convert to internal cite).

³ Fried, 241 add internal cite.

⁴ Oswald Spengler, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* (Munich: Beck, 1963 [1918]), 28–29.

⁵ Dieter Thomä “Heidegger als Mitläufer des Seins,” in *Heidegger und der Antisemitismus* ed. Walter Homolka and Arnulf Heidegger (Freiburg: Herder, 2016), 370.

⁶ Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Banality of Heidegger*, trans. Jeff Fort (New York: Fordham University Press, 2017), 15.

⁷ Peter Trawny, “Adyton,” in *Lire les Beiträge zur Philosophie de Heidegger*, ed. Alexander Schnell (Paris: Hermann, 2017), 33.

2. A Language of Struggle

Why does Heidegger write in this cryptic way? The conviction that one must wear a mask when engaging in “another way of communicating” is the result of Heidegger’s belief that an invisible struggle is underway between different human types: between those, on the one hand, whom he describes as thoughtless (GA 97: 18) and as *Unwesen* (GA 96: 255-256) and, on the other, those who alone possess an “essential force (*Wesenskraft*)” (GA 96: 179). The word *Unwesen* is ambiguous; while its meaning, literally translated, is ‘non-essence,’ it can also simply mean *mischievous* in ordinary language. In 1940, Heidegger denounced what he supposed was the real danger posed by that “species of the human type” (GA 96: 243) whose attitude is characterized by “weakness in the face of meditative thinking” (GA 96: 113). According to him, this species of human beings uproots the authentic human in his or her “essential species” (*Wesensart*) (GA 96: 258). Here as elsewhere, Heidegger employs a term, *Wesensart*, which was widely used under Nazism.⁸ It is “the German essence” that must be protected against the “devastation” of the “non-essence,” because the type of human beings, who do not know how to die but only at best “perish” (*verenden*; GA 96: 251), refuse to accept the inferior rank that is properly theirs (GA 96: 36). Instead, they actively seek to ensnare and destroy historical peoples (GA 96: 255). These degraded types threaten the essence of properly historical peoples, which is tantamount to de-racialization (*Entrassung*; GA 96: 56), Heidegger writes, thereby drawing upon an explicitly Nazi vocabulary. The conviction that there is an essential inequality among human types leads to a discriminatory and polygenist vision of humanity. This vision asserts that the majority of human types are “incapable” of “listening to the voice of *Seyn*” because they do not belong to the essence of history (GA 97: 9). According to the conspiratorial logic at play here, this fractured vision of humanity justifies a reaction that is a kind of self-defense of the genuinely historical human types against the devastation threatened by the degraded. Heidegger conceives this reaction as the “struggle of meditation” (GA 95: 33) or even as the “struggle for...[the] ownmost *essence*” (GA 95: 11).

Already early on, Heidegger was convinced of the necessity of fighting those whose pretensions to rationality and reasoned dialogue he sees as being mere subterfuge, the expression of a lack of force (*Unkraft*) and a devastation of essence (*Unwesen*). Already in March 1916, at the age of twenty-seven, Heidegger wrote to his fiancée Elfride that he wanted to declare “war on rationalism right through to the bitter end.”⁹ This declaration of war is not just a figure of speech but rather a guiding thread and foundation of his thought, now confirmed by the *Black Notebooks*. Contrary to the platitude repeated *ad nauseam*, Heidegger never sought to preserve rationalism from its excesses; rather, he never ceased to fight rationalism in all its forms. In fact, even before the publication of *Being and Time*, Heidegger attacked the ideal of certainty in knowledge, an ideal he considered to be an expression of “cowardice in the face of questioning,” that is, a symptom of fear in facing life in its fundamental uncertainties. In 1941, he continued to repeat the claim that the idea of progress, and faith in it, is an “idol” that holds at bay the productive “anxiety of the beginning” (GA 96: 222).

Heidegger goes even further: the theoretical attitude is not only a symptom of cowardice but also the expression of an aggressive will to “seize power” (*Bemächtigung*; GA 17: 65). This is what he describes from *Being and Time* onwards as a “dictatorship” of anonymous

⁸ For example, Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf: eine kritische Edition*, vol. 1, ed. Christian Hartmann et al. (Munich: Institut für Zeitgeschichte, 2016), 741. See also Google Ngram Viewer.

⁹ Martin Heidegger, “*Mein liebes Seelchen!*” *Briefe Martin Heideggers an seine Frau Elfride; 1915 - 1970* (Munich: btb, 2007), 35; Heidegger’s emphasis.

mediocrity in which the “they” (*das Man*), in Heidegger’s anthropomorphic characterization, exerts its domination in a way that is as “stubborn” as it is “inconspicuous.”¹⁰ Reading between the lines, the consequence is that true philosophy will consist in knowing how to resist and struggle against this slide into mediocrity.

Heidegger states in 1925 that it is a matter of fighting against “rootless beings,” in other words, against the liberals, socialists, communists and Jews who populate the uprooted and paved-over world of cities. Knowledge and progress: that is the motto of these unattached and ahistorical city-dwellers, the November traitors guarantee themselves an audience and readership through the radio and press, in cafes and in all the anonymous public places of major cities. To speak of a genuine thinking as expressed for a *public* would be nonsense for Heidegger, because authentic thought must be esoteric. Even more: *Being and Time* does not aim at opening up a reasoned dialogue; on the contrary, it implicitly rejects such dialogue, seeing it as the expression of a flight from life.¹¹ In a vision of the world that presents some, by virtue of their very essence, as engaged in a rootless struggle against those who are properly Dasein, not every man or woman is Dasein. The ‘they,’ whose essential feature is being without soil and roots, does not so much designate an alienating social structure as tacitly refer to human beings who are unattached in their very essence. It is not a matter of arguing but of awakening, inciting and, if necessary, doing violence to a Dasein somehow chloroformed by a perfidious ‘they.’ As Ernst Jünger says, you do not argue with the bourgeoisie, you fight them.¹² For Heidegger real thinking does not concern cognition (*Erkenntnis*) but a knowing (*Wissen*) which aims at “recalling to life” (*wiederbeleben*) the power of *being* or “awaking” (*erwecken*) and thus securing what he calls from 1923 onwards a “state of enrooted wakefulness” (GA 63: 16). In *Being and Time*, the notion of argument does not have any positive meaning because it is a matter of seeking to awaken a Dasein drugged by the ‘they’ done attunements (*Befindlichkeit*), which are always related to an attachment to the soil. In effect, what constitutes humanity for Heidegger is not primarily reason as shared by all, but rather an essence that destiny has either bestowed or not. Belonging, awakening and reverence are the key words of this thinking

3. An Indirect Language

But why does Heidegger not conduct this struggle openly? Why employ a cryptic language? This use of language is a reaction in keeping with the supposedly insidious character of the enemy’s attacks, which take place in the shadows. Even before 1927, Heidegger describes the ‘they’ as essentially perfidious, invisible and elusive. The enemy’s attacks are not open, honest, and face to face, hence the need for disguise in order to conceal the counter-attack from an enemy who is all the more dangerous because embedded everywhere and nowhere. What is truly terrifying, according to Heidegger, is the “invisible devastation” brought about by the “merchants” (*Händler*) and the “press” (GA 96: 146–147).

¹⁰ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson (Malden: Blackwell, 2013), 126.

¹¹ For a detailed study, see Sidonie Kellerer, “Sein und Zeit: Ein Buch für alle und jeden? Zu Heideggers Begriff des ‘Dasein,’” in “*Sein und Zeit*” *neu verhandelt*, ed. M. Heinz and T. Bender (Hamburg: Meiner, 2019), 113–60.

¹² In a passage manifestly threatening violence, and in reference to the “outrageous tragicomedy” of the worker and soldier councils after the First World War, which Jünger condemns for “petty and high treason against all that constitutes Germany existence” in favor of an alien bourgeois liberalism, he writes that “all dialogue” (*jede Unterhaltung*) must cease, “because here the silence that conveys a premonition of the silence of the grave is required.” Ernst Jünger, *The Worker: Dominion and Form*, trans. Lawrence Hemming and Bogdan Costea (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 2017), 14.

It takes no great effort to see who these metonymies designate: this is the language employed by the German far right to designate the Jews and their cultural influence.

The theme of invisible danger is a leitmotif in the *Notebooks*. This danger gives rise to a defense in the form of an “invisible philosophy” (GA 96: 87). Heidegger believes he has to camouflage how he expresses his thought so that it reaches only ears worthy of hearing it. Even in the *Notebooks*, the way he expresses himself remains coded until the military confrontation can actively and openly take over the spiritual struggle. When the enemy is forced to unmask himself, the struggle can become direct. Armed warfare continues by other means the war of words and the combat of the spirit.

An important aspect of this indirect language is its implicit anti-Semitism. The explicitly anti-Semitic passages are only the visible aspect of a resolutely equivocal discourse. In code, but nonetheless decodable – at least for the informed German reader, who can see without much difficulty the anti-Semitic undertones of phrases that refer to the “vain money changers” (*eitle Wechsler*; GA 94, 173) who, with malice and cunning, favor machinations, those “merchants” (GA 96: 114), alternately maliciously false and obsequiously cajoling, those “schemers and grabbers” (*Rechner und Raffer*), those “fanatics” (*Eiferer*; GA 96: 94) with their “tenacious dexterity in trafficking” (GA 95: 97). Anti-Semitism already appears in his texts prior to the Nazi seizure of power. To give one instance: In the summer semester of 1923 Heidegger taught that “everything modern” obscures itself in a cowardly fashion, and he provides the examples of “busyness, propaganda, nepotism” and “spiritual racketeering” (GA 63: 18–19). The anti-Semitic character of this last turn of phrase, *geistiges Schiebertum*, was clearly perceptible in 1923, the year of terrible inflation in Germany that was quickly attributed to the Jews by anti-Semites. Furthermore, in the well-known 1929 lecture course, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, Heidegger writes of “the uncreative activities of menials or profiteers” who suppress the “history of Dasein” (GA 29/30: 270).¹³ Failing to take in account these elements of his discourse inevitably means missing the significance of Heidegger’s use of certain notions, like for instance the “soil” (*Boden*) and the semantic field it occupies. So, while Thomä is certainly correct in saying that the word ‘soil’ is not inherently anti-Semitic, we cannot ignore that in Heidegger, as in Nazi discourse in general, it definitely takes on that signification.

The defeat of Nazi Germany only reinforced Heidegger’s anti-Semitic paranoia. Besides the sudden and obsessive theme of vengeance that emerged at that time in his writings, the theme of an invisible struggle remains prominent in volume 97 of the *Black Notebooks*, written in the years 1942–8. In the summer of 1946, Heidegger introduced the idea of a “killing machine [now] set against the Germans” (GA 97: 151), a machine that he insisted is “invisible” (GA 97: 156) and crueler than an immediate extermination, because this machine “metes out measured doses of suffering and torture while keeping everything inconspicuous and insidious” (GA 97: 151).

Being and Time does not escape this latent anti-Semitism. When discussing Heidegger’s texts, Hans Georg Gadamer noted in 1986 that “he who does not have an ear for the German language cannot know the intended concepts.”¹⁴ Gadamer alludes to an important feature of the xenophobic coding that upends the usual claim that Heidegger’s conceptual language applies universally to all human beings. Adorno, who certainly did have an ear for German, perceived over fifty years ago what the *Black Notebooks* today confirm: “In the philosophy of 1927, the uprooted intellectual wears the yellow mark of those who undo the

¹³ Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995).

¹⁴ Hans-Georg Gadamer, “Der eine Weg Martin Heideggers,” in *Neuere Philosophie 1: Hegel, Husserl, Heidegger* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1987), 421–22.

social order.”¹⁵ The extension of the metaphors of soil and rootedness to characteristics such as calculation, skill, seduction, lack of attachments, and so on, makes palpable the anti-Semitic atmosphere of *Being and Time*. Heidegger’s references to the Yorck-Dilthey correspondence in §77 only confirms an anti-Semitism already perceptible without this reference. Moreover, the characteristics just mentioned will crystallize after 1933 in the fundamentally anti-Semitic term “machinations” (*Machenschaften*), first found in the *Fundamental Questions of Philosophy*, a course from the summer semester of 1933 whose language is particularly violent. In this period of his work, Heidegger’s term *Machenschaft* was associated with rootlessness, with dispersion (*Zerstreuung*) and decomposition (*Auflösung*) (GA 36/37: 10).

If we do not take account of the central role of strategically equivocal language in Heidegger’s thought, it is possible to maintain, as does Thomä, that “until the 1930s, Heidegger gives the Jews a comparably small role only” (add internal cite). Thomä does indeed admit the possibility, in theory, that there is a discourse in Heidegger that is “stripped of direct designations” and whose context should be examined in order to bring out its anti-Semitic undertones. However, with regard to Heidegger’s formulation concerning the enemy to be flushed out, Thomä just sticks to the surface level of the text in which this violent language appears (GA 36/37: 89-90). He fails to establish the connection between this text and the seminar from the same period, 1933-34, in which Heidegger mentions “Semitic nomads” who do not have access to “our German space.”¹⁶ Thomä therefore isolates the texts instead of considering what unites them and thus ends up concluding that Heidegger’s discourse is brutal, yet remains “vague.”¹⁷ But this is not the case. To state it again: the main issue today is knowing *how* to read these texts.

Heidegger hoped to obtain a professorship in a German University because of *Being and Time*, which is probably why he employed euphemisms and coded language. It does not formulate an *explicit* political program and it is not in fact an “outright paean to National Socialism” (internal cite). Faye’s work draws attention to an element that should be recalled here, even though it has never been discussed by those who deemed Faye’s reading exaggerated. Ludwig Ferdinand Clauß wrote in a 1954 letter to Erich Rothacker that “the wisdom, for example, of a Heidegger – ‘I’ll say what I think when I am a full professor’ – was a wisdom that I lacked when I was young and today it is too late.”¹⁸ Pierre Bourdieu’s work on the socio-political discourse of the academic world and “the effect of disguise through the imposition of form”¹⁹ is illuminating on this point.

II. The Necessity for Contextualization

1. Decoding a Mythico-Political and Xenophobic Language

Fried points to several aspects that Faye highlighted as early as 2005, especially the importance of the historical, semantic, discursive and philological contextualization of

¹⁵ Theodor W. Adorno, *Jargon de l’authenticité de l’idéologie allemande*, trans. Eliane Escoubas (Paris: Payot, 1989), 148.

¹⁶ Martin Heidegger, “Über Wesen und Begriff von Natur, Geschichte und Staat,” in *Heidegger und der Nationalsozialismus I: Dokumente*, ed. Alfred Denker and Holger Zaborowski (Freiburg / Munich: Alber, 2009), 82.

¹⁷ Dieter Thomä, “Wie antisemitisch ist Heidegger?” in *Martin Heideggers ‘Schwarze Hefte’: Eine Debatte*, ed. Marion Heinz and Sidonie Kellerer (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp, 2016), 224.

¹⁸ Quoted by Volker Böhmigk, *Kulturanthropologie als Rassenlehre* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2002), 131.

¹⁹ Pierre Bourdieu, *The Political Ontology of Martin Heidegger*, trans. Peter Collier (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 78.

Heidegger's texts so as to grasp their full meaning. He rightly emphasizes that the contextualization of Heidegger's texts is all the more essential given that Heidegger uses a "tactic" "worthy of an Odysseus" (add internal cite). Thanks to this tactic, Heidegger has been able to seduce an entire generation of French scholars, thereby preserving his thought and ensuring its influence in the academic community. Faye's work shows that carrying out a philosophical study in no way excludes drawing upon history, semantics and philology. On the contrary, these different approaches are indispensable in that they complement each other.

Contextualization is all the more essential for non-German readers because Heidegger's systematic use of allusions, connotations and word-play is constitutive of the cryptic language that keeps foreign readers (*die Fremden*) at bay. There are innumerable examples of these word-games, of derivative figures of speech, and especially of paronyms. To give just one example, Heidegger brings out the following meanings from *hören*: "to be a part of" (*zugehören*), "to belong to" (*gehören*) and "to obey" (*gehörchen*) (GA 97: 9). In his political thought, with its mythological twist, the resonances of Germanic words ensure the truth of being, without argumentation.

For Heidegger – and this follows from his conception of reason – philosophizing is not so much explaining a line of reasoning but of "preserving" "the *force of the most elemental words*" against the "common understanding."²⁰ This force is not proportional to argumentative significance but to *Befindlichkeit*, a key term in Heidegger's work, which can be translated by "enrooted attunement" and which refers to the resonance or atmosphere that words have the power to evoke. It is important to note, as I have pointed out elsewhere,²¹ that *Befindlichkeit* has a double meaning in German, both spatial and emotional, which means that Dasein's 'mood' is inseparable from the location it finds itself in. Consequently, what Heidegger's thinking expresses is to be found in the allusive and equivocal use of "code words,"²² dog-whistle language (e.g. *Schiebertum*), suggestive word-play and so on. Very few scholars have seen that this language is fundamentally a kind of incantation, intended to evoke conviction through associations and connotations rather than clear argumentation. This deliberate and continual use of doublespeak makes Heidegger's texts extremely difficult to translate and therefore especially difficult for non-German speakers to comprehend.

Heidegger's words therefore never refer to general, abstract notions. They are always linked to a concrete, situated struggle that renders determinate their significance. What Carl Schmitt says of political terms, namely, that they are only comprehensible when it is clear "who these words concretely target, contest, combat and refute,"²³ is also fully applicable to how Heidegger expresses his thought.

Yet even though it has been over a decade since Faye's book on Heidegger and Nazism was published, it has had little to no effect on how most scholars approach Heidegger's texts. Commentators on his writings "are in the habit of paraphrasing his various texts in isolation, and of decontextualizing them more or less completely."²⁴ This corresponds to what Bourdieu summarizes as "the expectation of a pure and purely formal treatment, the requirement for an internal reading circumscribed by the space of the words" and as "the

²⁰ Heidegger, *Being and time*, 220.

²¹ Kellerer, "Sein und Zeit. Ein Buch für alle und Jeden?" 2019, 117.

²² M. Heidegger / K. Bauch, *Briefwechsel 1932-1975*, ed. Almuth Heidegger (Freiburg: Albert, 2010), 92.

²³ Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, trans. George Schwab (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 30-31.

²⁴ Emmanuel Faye, "Being, History, Technology and Extermination in the Work of Heidegger," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 50, no. 1 (January 2012), 127.

irreducibility of the self-engendered work to any historical determination.”²⁵ This decontextualization is subtly encouraged by various Heideggerian strategies, and it plays an integral role in the muddying of textual waters. This helps explain why this thinking has been successful, despite its discriminatory undercurrents.

We can draw a useful parallel: just as Heideggerian discourse subtly holds historical contextualization at a distance, its language also immunizes itself against critique. Henri Meschonnic noted nearly thirty years ago: “The major paradox of Heidegger’s language is that it allows us to observe the forgetting of language. Nonetheless, language is of the utmost importance in Heidegger.”²⁶ In other words, the indirect character of how Heidegger expresses his thought has rarely been studied as such, which is precisely the sign of its disconcerting effectiveness.

2. An Illustration of the Necessity for Contextualization

Providing historical contextualization means taking into consideration works like those of the historian Jürgen Falter. He has ascertained that 750,000 members of the NSDAP, the *Parteigenossen*, gave back in their party membership cards between 1925 and 1945. That means that it was possible to withdraw membership from the party without necessarily having to fear reprisals.²⁷ This finding sheds new light on the fact that Heidegger, who received his membership card in 1933, never returned it.

The importance of both historical and discursive contextualization was illustrated a few years ago in a case study of the expression “invisible war” (*unsichtbarer Krieg*) that Heidegger uses. In a letter of November 25, 1939, addressed to Doris Bauch, the wife of Kurt Bauch, Heidegger expresses his hope that this war will come.²⁸ We should connect this inherently sibylline formulation of an “invisible war” with the “invisible philosophy” that Heidegger advocates in the *Black Notebooks*.²⁹ At that moment in the history of Nazi Germany, the term “invisible war” referred to the Nazi counter-espionage campaign under the slogan of “The enemy is listening to us.”³⁰ This campaign was based on the anti-Semitic platitude, encouraged by the Nazis, of an underhanded, omnipresent and invisible Jewry seeking to seduce a naturally credulous and trusting people, the Germans.³¹ According to the Nazis, it was necessary to make the German people more distrustful and discreet. Hence Hitler wrote: “during the War, how often did we here the compliant that our people knew so little about keeping silent! How difficult it was to keep even important secrets from coming to the enemy’s awareness!” That is why Hitler counted the ability to keep silent, reticence (*Verschwiegenheit*), among the cardinal German virtues that must be inculcated. In an atmosphere dominated by

²⁵ Pierre Bourdieu, “Censure et mise en forme,” in *Langage et pouvoir symbolique* (Paris, Fayard, 2001), 367, n39.

²⁶ Henri Meschonnic, *Le langage Heidegger* (Paris: Puf, 1990), 185.

²⁷ Jürgen W. Falter, *10 Millionen ganz normale Parteigenossen: neue Forschungsergebnisse zu den Mitgliedern der NSDAP 1925-1945* (Mainz: Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, 2016).

²⁸ M. Heidegger/K. Bauch, *Briefwechsel*, 2010, 61.

²⁹ Sidonie Kellerer, “Heidegger et le nazisme au travers du prisme de sa correspondance,” in *Critique* 811, Heidegger: la boîte noire des Cahiers (December 2014), 988–98.

³⁰ Andreas Fleischer, *“Feind hört mit!” Propagandakampagnen des Zweiten Weltkrieges im Vergleich* (Münster: Lit, 1994).

³¹ See Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 805: “In seiner tausendjährigen händlerischen Gewandtheit ist er [der Jude] den noch unbeholfenen, besonders aber grenzenlos ehrlichen Ariern weitaus überlegen [...],” 805; *Mein Kampf: Complete and Unabridged, Fully Annotated* (New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1941), 425-26: “In his versatility of a thousand years’ trading he [the Jew] is infinitely superior to the clumsy and boundlessly honest Aryan, so that after a short time trade threatens to become his monopoly.”

mistrust and fear, the conviction that there was an invisible war, a war “of spirit and soul,”³² made the use of indirect language a national duty. One must know how to keep silent when faced with an invisible enemy. But at the same time, it was necessary to try to expose the enemy to everyone’s view. The yellow star, which identified the Jews and which they were obliged to wear after September 1939, served this purpose. There is a clear connection to be made between this imposition of a visible mark and the injunction Heidegger issues in one of his 1933 courses: “Find the enemy, bring him to light ... single out the enemy” (GA 36/37: 91). The theme of an invisible war, which is recurrent in Heidegger’s texts, is a mainstay of anti-Semitic ideology and the propaganda campaign against the allegedly deceitful and invisible Jews. Heidegger did no more than transpose the linguistic camouflage used by the executors of the ‘final solution’ onto the level of an ostensible philosophy.

3. An Illustration of the Effects of Decontextualization

If the fundamentally polemical and discriminatory intent of Heidegger’s language is not taken into account, then this can only lead to misunderstandings. Heidegger himself gives a passing indication, something like a wink, as to how to understand his texts: “To consider what is said as immediately and only what is stated — that is one of the inexhaustible sources of misunderstandings to which thought is exposed” (GA 97: 224).

Some of Richard Polt’s claims illustrate this misunderstanding. Polt thinks he can corroborate the fact that “Heidegger describes Nazism as brutal and criminal” by referring to a series of passages from the *Notebooks*. For example, there is a passage from around 1946 where Heidegger mentions the “horrors [*Greuel*] of National Socialism” (GA 97: 98) and then “the horror of the ‘gas chambers’ [*Greuelhaften der ‘Gaskammern’*]” (GA 97: 99). However, in Heidegger’s work such phrases do not speak for themselves. This is a crucial point, but largely ignored in the debates about Heidegger. To understand what they mean, we must consider the fact that the word *Greuel* was, at the time that Heidegger uses it, a very loaded term. Under Nazism, the word *greuelhaft* designated a supposed mendacious agitation (*Greuelhetze*) against the Third Reich by foreigners — especially the Jews — by means of their tool, the lying-press (*Lügenpresse*). Thus, there is good reason to think that Heidegger is carrying out a subtle reversal of meaning here, with “the atrocities [*Greuel*] of National Socialism” intimating calumny *against* Nazism. The doubt introduced by the adjective “atrocious” (*greuelhaft*) imbued with the *Lingua Tertii Imperii* — the pervasive and intentionally politicized, propagandized, and manipulated “Language of the Third Reich” that Victor Klemperer describes so well — is reinforced a few lines later by the use of quotation marks around the term “gas chambers.” Then, a page later, we read that the real concentration camp is in fact *Germany*, after its defeat by the Allies (GA 97: 100). Finally, it should be noted that when Heidegger explained in 1941 that a “people without history, blind to the point of not seeing its own rootlessness” is something more “horrible” than war, he used another term, *grausig*, and not *greuelhaft* (GA 96: 131). All these elements must to be considered so as not to risk inverting the sense of what Heidegger actually intended to say. This is what happened when, in a discussion with Faye in 2007, François Fédiér claimed that the use of the term “barbarian” was a criticism of Nazism. Today we know that the precise opposite is true. The barbaric principle that Heidegger calls for is opposed to what he calls “*brutalitas*.” He states that the latter term is deficient because it is of Roman origin (GA 95: 394). We know that for Heidegger the Romans are “entirely non-nordic and utterly non-German” (GA 95: 326). Far from being a critique of Nazism, his blatant contempt for *brutalitas* reflects a rejection of the objectifying relation to reality, which he considers too one-sided and “crass” (*pöbelhaft*; GA 95: 396) as a conception of the human

³² Bernhard von Rechenberg, *Der unsichtbare Krieg und seine Abwehr durch den deutschen Soldaten!* (Berlin: Nationalsozialistischer Reichskriegerbund, 1939), 14.

essence reduced to rationality (GA 95: 395). “The complexities of Heidegger’s positions” (Polt) appear to be quite trivial when properly contextualized. By way of comparison, Houston Stewart Chamberlain, in his racist *magnum opus* of 1899, calls the “Germanic peoples” “great harmless barbarians” who are “youthful, free and capable of achieving the utmost.” In Chamberlain’s understanding, this barbarian character is indicative of the “innate freedom” of the “German essence” as opposed to “those who are born slaves” (*Knechtgeborenen*).³³ Heidegger resonates with this when he states that barbarity is profound whereas brutality is bestial. This is, of course, a way of reversing the negative significance of the onomatopoeia that was originally used by the Romans to designate the Germanic ‘savages.’

Polt also refers to Heidegger’s use of the expression the “Nazi regime of terror [*Schreckensregiment*]” (GA 97: 156). But it should be recalled that in 1929 Heidegger, from the heights of his professorship, called for “the one who can inspire a terror in our Dasein.” It should also be remembered that the invocation of terror is by no means negative in the *Black Notebooks*. On the contrary, Heidegger mentions “terror and grace [*Schrecken und Segen*], the great attunements that enlist man” (GA 94: 91).

III. Philological Analysis

The contextualization needed to decode Heidegger’s doublespeak also requires philological work. This is because the cryptic expression of this thought is coupled with the shrewd editorial strategy implemented in the *Gesamtausgabe*. We now know that this edition of Heidegger’s “complete works” was to a large extent conceived as means of saving the author’s reputation after the fall of the Nazi regime and giving a philosophical guise to texts proclaiming extermination. This strategy consists in suppressing or retouching compromising passages, in hiding editorial criteria and in publishing such a large number of texts – unprecedented in the history of philosophy – that not even the specialists are capable of mastering them all.

Faye was the first to demonstrate the full importance of these frequent editorial manipulations after to the war and to stress that “an entire generation of French intellectuals engaged themselves with a Nietzsche distorted by Heidegger’s interpretation and largely reduced to his published texts.”³⁴ The textual manipulations do not only involve Heidegger’s courses on Nietzsche. Heidegger revised many of his texts without indicating that he had done so.³⁵ He also described the edition of his collected works as “complete” when in fact it is selective — and far from transparent in its manner of selection. Faye has not only analyzed this deceptive editorial policy, which Theodore Kisiel had already called an “international scandal of scholarship” in 1995, he also called for the opening up of the archives in 2006.³⁶ It is ironic to note that those who allege that Faye wants to “ban books from zones of the library and to relegate them to an ‘index’ of proscribed works!” (add internal cite) or that those who, like Jean-Luc Nancy, claim that that Faye wants to “put [Heidegger’s] work on trial before

³³ Houston Stewart Chamberlain, *Die Grundlagen des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Munich: Bruckmann, 1900), 528–29.

³⁴ Emmanuel Faye, *Heidegger, l’introduction du nazisme dans la philosophie. Autour des séminaires inédits de 1933 – 1935* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2005), 410.

³⁵ Sidonie Kellerer, “Rewording the Past. The Post-war Publication of a 1938 Lecture by Martin Heidegger,” *Modern Intellectual History* 11, no. 3 (November 2014), 575–602.

³⁶ Emmanuel Faye, “Pour l’ouverture des archives Heidegger,” *Le Monde* (January 4, 2006), https://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2006/01/04/pour-l-ouverture-des-archives-heidegger-par-emmanuel-faye_727243_3232.html.

the Nuremberg Tribunal,” have not signed the appeal against the censorship practiced by Heidegger’s heirs.³⁷ And following the schema of the victim becoming the accused – a classic, but rather unexpected in an academic setting – it is not Heidegger and his heirs who are deemed guilty of censorship, but the commentators who dare to point out the falsifications and to question the philosophical nature of his thought. Thomä does not hesitate to write that Faye “suffers from an identification with the aggressor” (add internal cite). This kind of inversion has become a tradition in the debate about Heidegger’s relation to Nazism. Similarly, Fried writes that Faye wants to “sniff [...] out apostates and destroy [...] their careers” (add internal cite). This is an odd formulation if we recall that because of the particularly critical nature of his 1999 book,³⁸ Johannes Fritsche has been ostracized in the field of Heidegger Studies in the United States.

So, while Fried’s willingness to engage in dialogue is to be welcomed, it should be stressed that a real dialogue would mean refusing invidious conflation, renouncing the questioning of the interlocutor’s good faith, and not falling back on pre-emptive avoidance tactics by treating those, like Faye and myself who are willing to probe the depths of his Nazism, as engaged in a malign conspiracy to discredit Heidegger. Some go so far as to invent a “clique” or to write that Rastier is “working the streets” for Faye.³⁹ Such remarks are certainly interesting from a sociological point of view. Rastier thinks that “insults here are a diversion tactic: increase the provocations, aim low, sow confusion and create the impression of a free for all where no holds are barred, thus rendering philosophical debate impossible.”⁴⁰ The following conclusion seems warranted: the very idea that Heidegger’s thought can pertain to anything other than the philosophical domain is inconceivable or intolerable to scholars who embrace Heidegger as the great philosopher of the twentieth century. Some of these scholars, who have devoted their professional lives to that idea, understandably find it difficult to admit their blindness.

IV. What Critique of Nazism?

1. Heidegger does not Describe Nazism as Criminal before 1945

Despite the publication of the *Black Notebooks*, many readers remain convinced that Heidegger distanced himself from Nazism towards the end of the 1930s. In 2016, the journalist Justus Wenzel spoke of “Heidegger’s (passing) enthusiasm for Nazism.”⁴¹ And Nancy thinks that the German thinker “overcame” the Nazis with the “virulence” of his critique and that he wrote “the opposite in private” to what he maintained in public.⁴² How can this alleged distancing be reconciled with the anti-Semitism that becomes explicit in the *Black Notebooks* from around about 1938 onwards (GA 95: 97)? Some scholars think that this anti-Semitism is the Nazi variety because there is no biologism in it. Others argue that the Jews are not the cause of devastation in the Heideggerian view but instead only accessories,

³⁷ Jean-Luc Nancy, “Dyslexies philosophiques,” *Libération* (November 21, 2017), http://www.liberation.fr/debats/2017/11/21/dyslexies-philosophiques_1611561.

³⁸ Johannes Fritsche, *Historical Destiny and National Socialism in Heidegger’s “Being and Time”* (Berkeley: Univiversity of California Press, 1999).

³⁹ Thomas Sheehan, “L’affaire Faye: Faut-il brûler Heidegger? A Reply to Fritsche, Pégny, and Rastier,” *Philosophy Today* 60, no. 2 (Spring 2016), 514, n90.

⁴⁰ François Rastier, *Heidegger, Messie antisémite. Ce que révèlent les “Cahiers noirs”* (Lormont: Le bord de l’eau, 2018), 132.

⁴¹ Uwe Justus Wenzel, “Im Zwielight der Zweideutigkeit,” *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (January 19, 2016), <http://www.nzz.ch/feuilleton/im-zwielight-der-zweideutigkeit-1.18679371>.

⁴² J.-L. Nancy, “Dyslexies philosophiques,” 2017.

“the profiteers of modernity’s bankruptcy.”⁴³ Lastly, there is an interpretation, widely shared by Heidegger’s defenders, that in his *Seinsgeschichte*, the Jews are just one element among many in a the broader leveling off of civilization at the end of the so-called first inception of the West’s history. On this account of the twilight of an epoch, the Nazis, the communists and the Jews are supposedly all equally “masters of machinations.”⁴⁴

And yet, this is a man who, in the spring of 1934, used the power conferred on him as rector of his university to obtain the establishment of a professorship for “Racial Teaching and Hereditary Biology” from the Ministry of Education (GA 16: 269). Are we to believe that he was an opponent of racism in private? This is the same man who, until 1942 at least, remained a member of the Academy for German Law, presided over by “the butcher of Poland,” Hans Frank.⁴⁵ This is a man who never turned in his party membership card, who never uttered a word of regret after the war, and who had a lasting friendship with the eugenicist Eugen Fischer, who in 1937 had participated in the forced sterilization of children described by the Nazis as “bastard Rhineland negros”? Did this Heidegger really “overcome” the Nazis with the “virulence” of his critique?

Polt claims that Nazism was a non-essence (*Unwesen*) to Heidegger. This is far from certain. Heidegger only uses this term to refer to Nazism *after* 1945 and always in an ambiguous way (GA 97: 250). *Before* the defeat of Germany, Heidegger associates neither Nazism as such nor Hitler with non-essence. Nor does he associate them with criminality or the absence of history, as claimed by Polt, who nowhere raises questions about Heidegger’s supposed “break” with his previous thought after the war. During the Third Reich, Heidegger nowhere likens Nazism to an “epidemic” (*Seuche*; GA 96: 259), or to “gangsterism” (*Verbrechertum*; GA 96: 266) or “scum” (*Abschaum*; GA 95: 96) that must be fought and eradicated. Yet this is precisely the language that Heidegger uses for the enemies of the Reich. At the time of the German-Soviet Pact, Heidegger wrote that the Germans and the Russians, the “peoples with an originary historical force” (GA 96: 56), must distance and protect themselves from what is “devoid of history,” which he claims is much worse than all bombs, than all wars (GA 96: 131). In contrast, there are the human types — especially the Jews — who are “the very principle of destruction” (GA 97: 20) and “blind to essence” (*wesensblind*; GA 96: 256), and thus incapable of meditating, that is, ultimately incapable of thinking (GA 96: 113). It is therefore untenable to claim that “National Socialism is discussed on hundreds of pages of the notebooks nearly always in a critical mode” (add internal cite).

2. Critique of “Petite Bourgeois” Politics

a. *The distinction Between the Führer and the Political Apparatus*

Heidegger’s critiques of Nazism cannot be understood outside the historical reality in which they are situated. This is a methodological principle ignored by dominant interpretations of Heidegger. By the end of the 1930s, the German population tended to cease conflating the cult of the Führer with the Nazi party, which was often associated with an incompetent and corrupt bureaucratic apparatus. Hence around 1937, Heidegger attacks “bureaucratism” which, he said, arises from an excessively mechanistic, technological and ultimately excessively liberal conception of reality that is not attuned to being. He wrote in

⁴³ D. Thomä, “Wie antisemitisch ist Heidegger?,” 2016, 220.

⁴⁴ Thomä, 218.

⁴⁵ S. Kellerer, “Heidegger n’a jamais cessé de soutenir le nazisme” [Heidegger never stopped supporting Nazism], *Le Monde* (October 27, 2017), 18.

1946 that if Nazism and fascism have not “succeeded” (*geglickt*), it is primarily because of the fact that “everything was seen only from a ‘political’ perspective, not even a metaphysical, not to mention a historical perspective [...] the ‘Party’ angle spread confusion everywhere” (GA 97: 130).

In the *Hitler Myth*, Ian Kershaw showed that the cult of the Führer became ever more prevalent as attitudes to everything connected with the Party became more critical. This cult of the supreme leader only began to unravel after 1942, when the first military defeats took place. The same holds of Heidegger’s texts up to this time: there were no substantial criticisms of the Führer before 1942.⁴⁶ The passages Polt cites, and notably the one mentioning “Hitler’s murderous madness”, date from after **the war**. Heidegger’s critique is directed especially at the Nazi party officials. He reproaches them for being “petite bourgeois”, for being one-sidedly fixated on blood and for not linking blood to essence? What exactly do these criticisms mean?

b. Not Only Blood: Ontologizing Racism

In 1940-41, Heidegger writes that “non-essence cannot be avoided solely by breeding and disciplining [*Züchtung*] the body” (GA 96: 190). Around 1936-37, he denounces “those who want to improve the quality of the people through ‘biology’ and selection” (GA 94: 364). For Heidegger, this one-sided biological way of trying to ensure the greatness of the German people is the result of “a ‘liberal’ idea of progress that has not yet been overcome” and that originates in Descartes (GA 94: 365). With regard to blood and biology, Heidegger opposes an “all to cheap either-or” (GA 94: 426). He thus agrees on this point with Hitler, who had written that “Parallel with the training of the body, the fight against the poisoning of the soul has to set in.”⁴⁷ Hence, when in the autumn of 1939 Heidegger maintains the “‘principles’ of ‘blood and soil’ are also based on machination” (GA 96: 55), he is not opposing racism but ontologizing it, that is, deepening and amplifying it. He advocates a racism that is not *only* based on blood but *also* and above all on a meditation on being assimilated to the “struggle for the liberation of the essence” (*Wesensbefreiung*; GA 96: 126). He does not deny the importance of blood; instead, he qualifies the role of blood, because spirit and essence play the superordinate role (GA 94: 351). To be satisfied with blood purity alone would be to lower oneself to the level of the Jews and their reductionism, because blood purity is a merely physical conception of race (GA 96: 56). In fact, one of the commonplaces of Nazi ideology was that focusing *only* on the physical attributes of race is a Jewish way of thinking. To give just one example, Chamberlain writes the following: “Never did an excessive sentimentality concerning humanity [...] let the [the Jews] forget even for one moment the holiness of physical laws. One sees with what mastery they use the *law of the blood* to extend their dominion.”⁴⁸

The theme of overcoming (*Überwindung*), in the sense of a revision or even of a radicalization of an already existing but superficially understood concept or phenomenon, is recurrent in Heidegger’s work. Heidegger expresses disgust at the merely superficial “Hölderlin fashion” of the day and contrasts it with a deeper Hölderlin that he elucidates. In the same way, he opposes a vulgar racism, whose concerns is only a self-interested calculation, and contrasts it with a more elevated racism understood as an essentialism. Heidegger deploys this schema of rejecting a so-called cheap alternative in numerous contexts. This also applies

⁴⁶ On the passage in *Besinnung* in which Heidegger uses one of Hitler’s formulations (GA 66: 122), see Faye, *Heidegger, l’introduction du nazisme*, 458–59.

⁴⁷ Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 667; *Complete and Unabridged*, 346.

⁴⁸ Chamberlain, *Die Grundlagen des 19. Jahrhunderts*, 324.

to his view on modernity, idealism, subjectivity and technology. For instance, he contrasts the “idolatry of technology” (GA 94: 261) with another, more essentialized conception.

Heideggerian discrimination by essence is really just an avatar of the racism propagated by the Nazis. It is a pseudo-philosophical elaboration of the latter and one that can pretend to be less vulgar. Instead of speaking of ‘vermin,’ it speaks of ‘non-essence,’ although sometimes it does speak more explicitly of an epidemic and of scum. We should recall another aspect of Faye’s work here, an aspect that like many others is never, or almost never, discussed by those who claim to be moderate interpreters of Heidegger’s work: the racist anti-Semitism that was a central element of Nazi ideology always mixed the biological and the spiritual. For example, in the Nazi period the term *Artung*, which is difficult to translate, designated a sensibility that surpasses what is inscribed in the blood, a certain “spiritual attitude” and “essence” that is at the foundation of the racial unity of the people.

c. Essence instead of Razza, Nazism instead of Fascism

Also crucial is that preventing Nazism from being gradually “suffocated” by invisible agents, according to Heidegger, means fighting against what he calls the imperceptible “de-racialization” of the German people. This fight primarily concerns the German language, which is threatened with a “total uprooting” (*völlige Entwurzelung*; GA 95: 94). The proposed remedy is Germanization. Heidegger thus places himself within a long *völkisch* tradition which has been well-documented by the historian Uwe Puschner, who has traced it back to the creation of the *Allgemeiner Deutscher Sprachverein* in 1885. The aim of this association had been to cultivate the “most exquisite treasure of our stock: our mother tongue.”⁴⁹ Accordingly, for Heidegger, the Italian *razza* must give way to “stock” (*Stamm*) and “lineage” (*Geschlecht*), whose union is the “German essence.” This is an essentialization that gives a semblance of depth to a murderous ideology. It should be noted that from *Being and Time* onwards, Heidegger prosecutes a deliberate strategy for the “elimination of foreign words in Eduard Engel’s radical pan-German sense,” as Robert Minder noted at the beginning of the 1980s.⁵⁰

What holds of *razza* is equally true of *fascio*. Heidegger does indeed attack fascism, but should this be seen as a critique of Nazism? By no means: Heidegger carefully distinguishes between Nazism and fascism (GA 95: 408). He claims that the latter is on the side of Catholicism and “Romanism” which are “*completely non-Nordic and non-German*” (GA 95: 326). To transform Heidegger’s Nazism into an “archi-fascism,” a kind of transcendent Nazism, as Nancy did, following Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, is a widespread misinterpretation firmly anchored in Heidegger scholarship.

Far from expressing a “horrified fascination” (add internal cite) with Nazism, Heidegger instead advocates a National Socialism that expresses an inflexible will to power. He makes this explicit in a text from around 1941, “Nietzsche’s Metaphysics” (GA 50). As Faye has shown, Heidegger writes an apology for the so-called “extreme” nihilism of the will to power and the increase of this power, particularly in the service of the “machinalization” (*Machinalisierung*) and the “shaping of man” (GA 50: 56-7). Only a few historical peoples have enough “commanding force” (GA 50: 59) to measure up to this nihilism. In the winter of 1941, when the invasion of the Soviet Union and the implementation of the plans for the extermination of the Jews of Europe was underway, the only truly decisive question,

⁴⁹ Adolf Reincke cit. by Uwe Puschner, *Die völkische Bewegung im wilhelminischen Kaiserreich: Sprache-Rasse-Religion* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2001), 33.

⁵⁰ Robert Minder, “Heidegger und Hebel oder die Sprache von Meßkirch,” in *Dichter in der Gesellschaft: Erfahrungen mit deutscher und französischer Literatur* (Frankfurt a.M.: Insel, 1983), 234.

according to Heidegger, was finding out which people would measure up to the challenge to conquering the earth in the service of the will to power.

d. Preventing a Weakening of Power

In 1933, Eugen Fischer had lamented that “woman today of inferior quality” were having “mentally incapable” children and were “reproducing at an above average rate.” He added that what was at stake was “eliminating pathological hereditary lineages.”⁵¹ At this time, Heidegger explained to the Institute of Pathological Anatomy at Freiburg that “a people and an era,” “in accordance with their Dasein,” inscribe into marble the law of “what is healthy and what is sick” (GA 16: 151). That is precisely what constitutes the “will to power” for Heidegger, properly understood as “overpowering” (*Übermächtigung*; GA 48: 6). Power must not lose its edge. Such aims are consistent with Heidegger’s letter of June 7, 1936 to his friend and colleague Kurt Bauch, where he writes that “National Socialism would be beautiful *as a barbaric principle* – but it should not be so bourgeois.”⁵² This is one of the many elements rarely mentioned in the debate over the nature of Heidegger’s philosophy. Heidegger criticizes Nazi policy because he does not consider it radical enough. He states that “the danger is making [Nazism] harmless by preaching about the True, the Good and the Beautiful [...]” (GA 94: 194). He does not vilify the movement as such but rather the “party policy” which is too inclined to the routine. Faced with the petty bourgeois (*spießbürgerlich*) everydayness of the Nazis, what is urgently needed, he insists, is to “light the flame” of the “struggle for the ownmost essence of the German people” (GA 95: 11). Heidegger is not a representative of a Nazism that is, so to speak, idealized and therefore more reputable; instead, he is an advocate for a radicalized version of it that risks much higher stakes. This is clearly a central point that neither Polt nor Thomä consider.

The texts known to us today testify to Bourdieu’s foresight. As early as 1975, he had emphasized that Heidegger thought that Nazism was not radical enough. He observed that “Heidegger was ‘disappointed’ by Nazism, that is, undoubtedly by the ‘vulgar’ and insufficiently *radical* aspects of the movement.” Bourdieu also hypothesized that Heidegger’s resignation from the rectorate in 1934 was the result of the insufficient institutional power that the Nazis, themselves “probably frightened by his *radicalism*,” were willing to grant this philosopher of the movement, who nonetheless believed himself to have been called by destiny to guide the *Führer*.⁵³

e. Avoiding Ensnarement by the Jewish Non-Essence

Finally, the determination to raise the stakes and the notion of the will to power as a perpetual movement are all the more indispensable in Heidegger’s view because one of the defects of the Germans is their susceptibility to seduction by an alienating distraction. “The German’s hereditary defect is their looking to what is foreign” (GA 95: 10). The struggle against alienation (*Entfremdung*) in the face of what Hitler calls the “diabolical dexterity of these seducers,” the Jews, is all the more urgent. Will the Germans have enough force – because it is this that really is at stake here - for “essential decisions” (GA 95: 388)? It is obviously not a

⁵¹ Eugen Fischer, “Die Fortschritte menschlicher Erblehre als Grundlage eugenischer Bevölkerungspolitik,” in *Mein Heimatland. Badische Blätter für Volkskunde, ländliche Wohlfahrtspflege, Denkmal-, Heimat- und Naturschutz, Familienforschung* (1933), no 20, ed. Landesverein Badische Heimat, 210–19; also published in: *Deutsche Forschung* 20 (1933), 55–71.

⁵² Heidegger/Bauch, *Briefwechsel*, 29-30 (Heidegger’s emphasis).

⁵³ Bourdieu, *L’ontologie politique*, 113.

matter of physical but rather of spiritual force. The greatest imaginable danger for Heidegger is dependence on an invisible and monstrous enemy who, like a hydra, grows more powerful in the struggle. Hence in 1939 he writes that “The danger of ‘spiritual’ struggle does not consist in defeat or annihilation but in the certainty of an inevitable dependence on the opponent, the *adoption* of *its* essence and its non-essence” (GA 95: 326). To put it otherwise: In this particular struggle, which remains invisible until the moment of open confrontation, it is especially necessary to ensure that the enemy does not insidiously and imperceptibly destroy the spiritual essence of the Germans and with it the German race. This is why the best way to combat this enemy is to avoid all contact with it, thereby to driving it to exclude itself of its own accord (GA 95: 97). At the precisely the time when Hitler began his war of extermination in the occupied zones of Eastern Europe, Heidegger writes that “the highest political deed” consists in “imperceptibly implicating the enemy in a situation in which he finds himself forced to carry out his own self-extermination” (GA 96: 262). For the Heidegger of the *Notebooks*, therefore, it is a matter of is preventing Nazism from being weakened by the non-essence, from being insidiously rendered incapable of fighting its enemies.

V. Heidegger’s Antisemitism

1. Destructive Parasitism

In a line of argument mirrored here by Dieter Thomä, Peter Gordon in 2014⁵⁴ argued that the Jews were not the real cause of the intrigues in modernity. But what did Heidegger actually say in 1942? “Jewry,” he wrote, “is the principle of destruction in the era of the Christian West, that is, of metaphysics” (GA 97: 20). It would be difficult to issue a more overwhelming condemnation of the Jews. Nonetheless, Thomä thinks that this statement expresses hesitation as to the “exact extent of the role of the Jews in the history of metaphysics” because this maximal accusation is counter-balanced elsewhere (add internal cite). Thomä insists that Heidegger accuses the Romans of having corrupted the original Greek conception of truth (GA 5: 8) and that Heidegger supposedly describes the Jews as ‘only’ parasitic on modern metaphysics, which is the original evil. Fried, in a recent article, makes a similar point.⁵⁵ But the contrary is actually the case: In a 1932 lecture course, Heidegger taught that it was in fact a Jewified and Roman Christianity that “distorted the emerging philosophy, namely the Greek”; what is too often ignored is that “Rome, Judaism and Christianity” are inseparable for him (GA 35: 1). Such claims by Heidegger are hardly original. Hitler himself wrote on the theme of an alleged coincidence between the rise of the Jews and the expansion of the Roman Empire in *Mein Kampf*.⁵⁶ So, while Heidegger describes the lack of soil as Roman, it is also Jewish. Heidegger treats this Jewified Christianity as the source of the “modern spirit,” hence of rationalism and especially of Cartesianism. Two conclusions must be drawn. The first is that anti-Semitism plays a fundamental structural role in Heidegger’s thought. It is in no way just the expression of a general and superficial affect or attitude common among right-wing Germans of the time. The second is that Jewified Christianity does indeed have a “creative agency,” contrary to Polt’s view (add internal cite), for example.

⁵⁴ Peter E. Gordon, “Heidegger in Black,” *New York Review of Books* (October 9, 2014), <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2014/10/09/heidegger-in-black/?pagination=false&printpage=true>.

⁵⁵ Gregory Fried, “‘Whitewashed with Moralism’: On Heidegger’s Anti-Americanism and Anti-Semitism,” in *Heidegger and Jewish Thought: Difficult Others*, ed. Elad Lapidot and Micha Brumlik (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018), 61.

⁵⁶ Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 803; *Complete and Unabridged*, 425.

According to Heidegger, what defines “Jewry” is above all its lack of attachments and its worldlessness (GA 95: 97). “Empty rationality and calculative ability” (GA 96: 46) and the lack of history, of thought, and of world all go together. Furthermore, Jewry is that “species of human beings” whose historical role is to lie, to seduce, to alienate and thus to annihilate other peoples. They are the ones who are “chosen” (*ausersehen*) to deceive and to seduce (GA 95: 96) and ultimately to uproot and to de-racialize. In summer of 1941, at the time of the invasion of the Soviet Union, Heidegger writes: “The question concerning the role of world Jewry is not racial. It is the metaphysical question about the type of human beings who, being *absolutely unattached*, can assume the ‘task’ in world history of uprooting of all beings from being” (GA 96: 243). Far from being just incidentally anti-Semitic, Heidegger’s critique of rationalism rests on a fundamentally discriminatory vision, an ontologized racism.

Thomä refers to the supposed parasitic status of the Jews to corroborate his thesis about Heidegger’s thought, namely that that the Jews are not the real evildoers but rather those who profiteer from modern decay. But are we then also to conclude that for Hitler the Jews, being parasites, are not the root of all evil because by definition a parasite ensures its survival by living off another being? Obviously not. Heidegger asserts altogether logically that although the parasitic Jews do not have their own vital resources – Heidegger says that this “race” is incapable of “understanding the occult domains of decision” “on its own” – that does not mean that this race is not the “principle of destruction” (GA 96: 46). There is no contradiction here. He simply claims that “Jewry” is not a “creative,” but rather an exclusively destructive principle, which is another anti-Semitic platitude if there ever was one — and certainly one that Hitler promoted.⁵⁷

The hackneyed anti-Semitic trope of the Jew as parasite, which Heidegger here deploys, stresses above all that the Jews are devoid of any “self” (*Selbst*), any essence and also any enrooted attunement (*Befindlichkeit*), that they have no access to being and hence no homeland. The Jews are the embodiment of non-essence and non-being. With respect to such remarks, Faye has spoken of an ontological negationism and the “complete dehumanization of Judaism.”⁵⁸

VI. A Clear-Sighted Critique of Modern Rationalism?

After the Second World War, Heidegger succeeded in presenting himself as not only uncompromised by Nazism, as did many other Nazis, but also in making it appear as if he had developed an analysis of Nazism as the product of the excesses of modern rationalism. He accomplished this strategic *mise-en-scène* primarily in the “Letter on Humanism” (1947) and in the two volumes *Nietzsche I* and *Nietzsche II* (1961). Heidegger thus staged himself as the thinker who had transcended the will to power, the thinker of serenity (*Gelassenheit*), even as a precursor of ecological philosophy. It is remarkable that even the publication of the *Black Notebooks* has not definitively discredited this deception. Hence the interpretations of Fried, Polt and Thomä agree in that they all think that during the Second World War Heidegger aimed at “wiping out the mindset of self-empowerment and domination” so as to extol an “attentiveness to Being” (add internal cite).

Against this line of interpretation, it is first important to remember that we now have a number of indications that contradict the assessment that “Heidegger conflated any and all

⁵⁷ For example, see Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 785; *Complete and Unabridged*, 417: “What [the Jew] achieves in the field of art is either bowdlerization or intellectual theft. With this, the Jew lacks those qualities which distinguish creatively and, with it, culturally blessed races.”

⁵⁸ Faye, 2005, 482; also E. Faye, “La ‘vision du monde’ antisémite de Heidegger à l’ombre des Cahiers noirs,” in *Heidegger: le sol, la communauté, la race*, ed. E. Faye (Paris: Beauchesne, 2014), 312.

modes of technology,” as Peter Gordon notably claims.⁵⁹ Is it necessary to recall that Heidegger chose his words carefully in the 1966 *Der Spiegel* interview when he claimed that Nazism had taken a satisfactory direction with regard to the “relation” between the human and the essence of technology?⁶⁰ When Heidegger spoke in 1940 of the “motorization of the *Wehrmacht*,” he was, according to Polt, attacking the Nazis as representatives of a “perverse essence.” But Polt does not say a word about Heidegger’s letter of May 18, 1940, written at much the same time, to his wife Elfride. Far from “slaying” technological reason, Heidegger does not hesitate to praise it – as long as it is put in the service of the German essence.⁶¹

What do the *Black Notebooks* say about Heidegger’s view of technology in the Nazi period? Around 1934, Heidegger advocates a “creative [*schöpferisch*] and not just an organizational [*organisierend*] relation to technology” (GA 94: 178). He does not call technology as such into question but rather what he describes as the “idolatry of technology” (GA 94: 261). Around 1937, he wrote that what is at stake is “mastering” “the essence of technology” (GA 94: 356). In the summer of 1941, when Hitler’s invasion of the Soviet Union in Operation Barbarossa was underway, Heidegger noted that “previously,” in his book *The Worker* (1932), Ernst Jünger had “perceived the fact of technology” better than he did later (GA 96: 212). What does Jünger say about technology in *The Worker*, where he had properly aligned himself with Nietzsche, according to Heidegger? There, Jünger emphasizes that technology is not a “universally valid, neutral domain that grants access to any force.” There is no technology in general, but every form of life “has the technology commensurate and innate to it.”⁶² Hence the bourgeois, who is only concerned with his security and comfort, “is not capable of using technology as an instrument of power proportional to his existence.”⁶³ Jünger speaks of “technology’s double face,” emphasizing that “the martial aspect of technology’s Janus face” deserves approval. Heidegger espouses just that distinction when he writes that the machine must be “ventured as a counter-God” (GA 96: 257). He adds in a tone of approval: “Only unconditioned human types, who do not shrink back before the highest subjectivity, are strong enough to submit to the metaphysical essence of technology” (GA 96: 257). This implies and thus explains Heidegger’s alliance with a ‘reactionary modernism,’ one intent not to retreat back behind the Enlightenment, but instead to beat it at its own game.⁶⁴

All this only confirms Faye’s 2005 interpretation of Heidegger’s 1941–42 course on *Nietzsche’s Metaphysics*. Faye concludes that the “all too famous Heideggerian ‘question of technology’ is above all a cover for a revisionist strategy.”⁶⁵ Just as Heidegger distinguishes between an authentic and an inauthentic technology, he also distinguishes between different forms of subjectivity. My own archival research has showed that Heidegger distinguished between an “authentic modernity and an inauthentic modernity” at a famous 1938 conference.⁶⁶ Thomä mentions the “important findings” of this study in passing, but even though this article was published seven years ago and has been available in English for four years, it has never been discussed until now by any of the commentators who believe that Heidegger’s thought still has something to offer us today. Neither are the problems of the

⁵⁹ Gordon, “Heidegger in Black,” 2014.

⁶⁰ M. Heidegger, *Antwort: Martin Heidegger im Gespräch* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1988), 105.

⁶¹ Faye, “Being, History, Technology, Extermination,” 125.

⁶² Ernst Jünger. *The Worker*, ed. L. P. Hemming, trans. B. Costea (Evanston, IL.: Northwestern University Press, 2017), 23.

⁶³ Jünger, 46.

⁶⁴ For a discussion of this period, see Jeffrey Herf, *Reactionary Modernism: Technology, Culture, and Politics in Weimar and the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

⁶⁵ E. Faye, *Arendt et Heidegger: extermination nazie et destruction de la pensée* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2016), 209.

⁶⁶ Kellerer, “Reworking the Past,” 588.

editorial policy in Heidegger's *Gesamtausgabe* and the textual manipulations that this policy involves, nor the philological research on the archives that have given us a detailed illustration of these manipulations even so much as mentioned in the 2013 reissue of the *Heidegger-Handbuch*, supervised by Thomä.

The first volumes of the *Black Notebooks* confirm that Heidegger does not completely reject modern subjectivity and that he does not seek to deprive the subject of its will to power but rather the exactly opposite. Hence, around 1938-39, Heidegger notes that German idealism is a specifically German metaphysics that finds its highest expression in Leibniz, Hegel and Schelling (GA 96: 7). It is worth noting that this line of 'argument' can also be found in *Mein Kampf*, where Hitler writes that "real idealism" is a "fundamental disposition" of the Germans, in opposition to "egoism," and it means "the individual's ability to sacrifice himself for the community, for his fellow citizens [*Mitmenschen*]." ⁶⁷ The Nietzsche course corroborates this assessment. Heidegger lauds German idealism, which had perceived and elaborated "the uttermost possibility of the essence of subjectivity" as will to power (GA 50, 48ff.). German idealism is the expression of an "ownmost nature" (*Eigenart*) of the German people. The German people have in themselves "the experience of the essence of being at its beginning" as its "original ownmost capacity" (GA 96: 9). Accordingly, German idealism is an authentic form of metaphysics, which is called historial (*geschichtlich*), in contrast to historical (*historisch*). So, when Heidegger calls for the overcoming (*Überwindung*) of metaphysics, he nowhere advocates a break, neither with modern times nor with metaphysics in general (e.g. GA 96: 9), contrary to what Thomä maintains. It is instead a matter of thinking "the subjectivity of the subject" in a way that is "deeper and thus also more threatening" than Descartes, the father of inauthentic metaphysics (*metaphysische Nichtigkeit*; GA 96 : 258). For Heidegger, the task is to overcome Platonic and Judeo-Christian subjectivity, the latter being nothing but "veiled" (*verhüllt*) and "suppressed" (*niedergehalten*) subjectivity (GA 50: 46, 49).

VII. What Philosophical Legacy?

At the end of his open letter Fried lays out what he thinks Heidegger's thought can still offer us today. First of all, he maintains that because no philosophical question is inherently bad, all subjects should be open to discussion. He writes: "I believe that a philosophy may be evil and still be philosophy" (add internal cite) and draws our attention "to other philosophers whose ideas are very distasteful to us," like Voltaire and Kant. But it must be pointed out that anti-Semitism plays a completely different role in Heidegger's philosophy to these thinkers and one that is in no way comparable to Kant, who always defended rationality, the universality of human rights, dialogue and tolerance.

I will not address here the absurd question of whether the love of wisdom can include racism and calling for extermination. We can simply ask if it is really possible to read *Mein Kampf* as a philosophical work, as Donatella di Cesare thinks. ⁶⁸ In order to clarify Heidegger's thought, it is necessary to insist on a crucial point that Fried either takes for granted or ignores. He speaks, as if it were self-evident to do so, of Heidegger's arguments, his methods of justification, and so on. But Heidegger neither respects nor accepts the *sine qua non* of all philosophy: I hold it to be legitimate to require, at least at the beginning of philosophy, that we recognize reason as the means of advancing in thought and, correlated with this, that we recognize and practice reasoned argument in the rational framework accepted as a shared

⁶⁷ Hitler, *Mein Kampf*, 775; *Complete and Unabridged*, 410.

⁶⁸ Donatella Di Cesare, "Heidegger, das Sein und die Juden", in *Information Philosophie* (August 2014), 10.

dialogue with the interlocutor. One of the achievements of twentieth-century philosophy, one for which Heidegger cannot claim parentage, is the insight that the course of genuine thinking may lead it, in its search, to run up against the limits of its own rational requirements and thereby to recognize, from *within* thinking, those moments when it is necessary to renounce exposition that is transparent and discursive. Heidegger, however, abdicates all claim to rationality at the outset of his thinking. To say that silence is the essential form of discourse because it is necessary to put a stop to the idle chatter of the ‘they’ (SZ, 296), to affirm that “reason” is “the most obstinate enemy of thinking” (GA 5: 247), and that the “mania for refutation constitutes the first falling away from authentic thinking” (GA 95: 410) – all this means immediately putting oneself *outside* of the limits of thinking and thus outside the premises of philosophy. Furthermore, Heidegger did not deceive himself on this point because he did not maintain that his thought should be described as philosophy (see, for example, GA 94: 115), preferring instead the term “stance” (*Haltung*, GA 27: 341–2) 354) and ultimately “worldview” (*Weltanschauung*; GA 27: 397–98).⁶⁹

This abandonment of reason and argument, in favor of a form of “thinking” that takes an incantatory “stance” that evades all refutation, obviously lies at the heart of the current debate that will decide the future of research on Heidegger. It is because Fried takes it for granted that Heidegger’s thought, at least before 1933, is not sustained by dogma, faith or Messianism that he claims that “to answer Heidegger [...] we must do so on the field of philosophy” (243 add internal cite) and speaks of Heidegger as a “genuine philosopher” (244 add internal cite). However, for reasons that I could only outline within the limited framework of this essay, I think that this amounts to submitting to Heidegger’s obsessive and conspiratorial form of thought, one that tends to neutralize the critical faculties. “To answer” Heidegger means breaking with hermeneutics based on trust and thus breaking with any such submissive attitude. Hence, Derrida spoke of Heidegger in 1999 in terms of (dis)obedience and of “obsessive fear” (*hantise*) under the eye the “overseer” (*contre-maître*).⁷⁰ At the turn of this century, Derrida also maintained that the “incalculable future” of Heidegger’s thought lies in “deciphering” his *Gesamtausgabe*, but still in the form of an interpretation *immanent* to Heidegger’s thought. In turn, Nancy urged the “dyslexics” — meaning Heidegger’s critics — to learn to read the Freiburg thinker’s texts properly.⁷¹ Both of these statements are tantamount to imposing the authority of a corpus of texts that are declared *a priori* philosophical, but that is precisely what must now be contested.

The task today consists in freeing up what Heidegger meant and in assessing it, rather than in embroidering endlessly on the platitudes of his reception, such as that the German thinker represents “the inevitably of confrontation with our planetary politics” (Fried 246 add internal cite). That is why it now seems necessary to stake out a methodological principle: If understanding Heidegger really does begin with the reading of his texts, it cannot end there. Recent research has demonstrated this conclusively. In confronting his texts and determining the meaning of his thought, a careful consideration of the historical context and a meticulous reliance on philological work are particularly important hermeneutical requirements. Of course, like all critical work, this also implies avoiding over-hasty generalizations. For example, instead of generalizing about the significance of the term “invisible,” any hypothesis should be carefully weighed against intertextual considerations, such as the historical and

⁶⁹ See, on this point, E. Faye’s conclusion in the work directed by him: *Heidegger, le Sol, la Communauté, la Race*, 321ff.

⁷⁰ Catherine Malabou and Jacques Derrida, *Jacques Derrida: la contre-allée* (Paris: Quinzaine littéraire-Louis Vuitton, 1999), 57.

⁷¹ Dominique Janicaud, “Entretien avec Derrida”, in *Heidegger en France*, vol. 2, ed. D. Janicaud (Paris: Flammarion, 2001), 108; J.-L. Nancy, “Dyslexies philosophiques,” 2017.

discursive context. In short, this means drawing careful distinctions, in the best sense of the term, when we read Heidegger.

The reception of Heidegger's thought is the history of a success. Does this success vouch for the quality of his thinking? If so, then the syllogism would be as follows: (1) Sartre was a great mind. (2) Sartre took Heidegger to be a great thinker and was inspired by him. (3) Conclusion: Heidegger's thinking is profound, because Sartre's thought is profound. But the logic that moves from (1) to (3) is specious. It would be just as specious to deduce in an inverse fashion that Sartre's work is invalid from his misunderstanding of *Being and Time*.

In the debates over Heidegger, as in all philosophical debates, the argument from authority cannot be valid. What should matter instead is answering a question that is arduous because it is totally new in the history of philosophy. It is the question concerning a philosopher who deliberately uses indirect and veiled language to mislead his readership and as a means to domination. Something must be understood that is particularly difficult because it is unprecedented in the history of philosophy: What is at issue here is an intentional philosophical deception for the purposes of domination and taking power in the spiritual and political fight for Nazism. For example, even if, like Heidegger, Joseph de Maistre and Edmund Burke also devised their writings as war machines –against the French Revolution and the Enlightenment – then at least they waged their wars openly.

We might also ask: How could Sartre be mistaken about *Being and Time*, and why did Herbert Marcuse think it was possible to reconcile this work to some degree with Marxism, and why did Emmanuel Levinas hold this book in such high regard? Answering this important question requires striking the right balance, and above all it means asking what these different authors thought they would find in Heidegger's body of work. Then, by drawing upon recent research on what Heidegger did actually say, we can assess to what degree to which a thinking like that of Sartre — or of Marcuse, or of Lévinas — is situated in the trajectory of Heidegger's own thought.

Of course, nothing forbids “turn[ing] to ‘his’ questions and answers and... wrest[ing] them from him” (Fried, [add internal cite](#)). But it is still necessary to determine *what* his questions and answers are and if his questions are really even his own, since we know that one of Heidegger's ploys is, to put it politely, borrowing from other philosophers. He never, or almost never, acknowledges his indebtedness, be it to Kierkegaard, Carl Braig, Franz Rosenzweig, Cassirer⁷² or others. To add insult to injury, he then grafts these borrowed ideas onto extreme right-wing banalities, sublimated into a pretended ontology with the veneer of an apparent profundity.

And of course, there is nothing stopping us from thinking a thinker against himself or herself. But in this case, we should rather ask the question in terms of the *coherence* of the thinking. Current research leans towards confirming that the thought of the author of *Being and Time* is actually very coherent — but that coherence has to do with his long-standing anti-Semitism, blood-and-soil nationalism, and racism, not with a genuinely philosophical project in which we can share, even in disagreeing with him.

What is likely to remain of Heidegger's thought is the unique history of its reception. As Robert Minder ironically puts it: Heidegger's philosophy is “in its own way something as real and factual, as unwavering and steady on its feet as the beautiful cattle at the Messkirch

⁷² Stéphane Mosès, *The Angel of History: Rosenzweig, Benjamin, Scholem*, trans. Barbara Harshav (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009). On the borrowings from Braig and Cassirer, see E. Faye, “Das Sein als Mythos oder als Begriff: Heidegger und Cassirer,” in “*Sein und Zeit*” *neu verhandelt*, ed. Heinz and Bender, 67–112.

fair.”⁷³ The bankruptcy of Heidegger’s thought opens up a field of research on the fact its success after the war and especially on how enduring this success was. How was this possible, given the self-evident and virulent extremity of his views? The illusions that his thought have engendered point to the unprecedented nature of the strategies of exclusion, submission and control brought to bear by a body of work flying the false flag of philosophy. Leo Strauss has examined the manner of writing between the lines that is induced by persecution, but what do we know of the writing between the lines whose objective is annihilation?

⁷³ Robert Minder, “Heidegger und Hebel oder die Sprache von Meßkirch,” 285.